



**DIRECTOR OF HUMAN SERVICES/  
DIRECTOR OF PERSONNEL**

**JOINT REGULATION NO. 5**

**VOLUNTARY CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

***Revised and Effective: September 3, 2019***

The City of St. Louis recognizes the need for a confidential, problem solving process where parties can voluntarily resolve interpersonal conflicts that occur in the workplace. Conflict can occur in City operating departments due to social interactions between people who have different goals, objectives, values and backgrounds, especially in positions that are high stress due to the nature of the service. In order to address proactively conflicts when they arise, the City of St. Louis Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted with the Conflict Resolution Center (CRC).

The CRC provides a community mediation process whereby parties in a dispute can work together under the guidance of a trained mediator to reach a solution without resorting to more formal, adversarial processes. Oppositional employee grievances and/or the costly, polarizing processes of appeals and/or litigation can sometimes be avoided if conflicts are addressed quickly and in a non-adversarial manner. The City of St. Louis encourages mediation as a faster, less formal and voluntary method of resolving conflicts. This process is also less expensive compared to other dispute resolution systems.

## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this joint regulation is to advise City employees of the services offered by the CRC and explain how employees can use this process on a voluntary basis. CRC's mission is to provide professional dispute resolution services that are accessible to all and to be the leader in promoting peaceful, lasting and effective solutions in St. Louis between its citizens and employees.

## **II. POLICY**

The CRC will provide the mechanism to discuss constructive solutions to resolve differences, conflicts, and reconcile transgressions between citizens, community leaders, community businesses and other agencies, elected officials, police and other employees

of the City of St. Louis. The services of the CRC are available to each of these different entities.

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

- A. Mediation is a voluntary, facilitated conversation between parties involved in a dispute. Mediators are professionally-trained volunteers who assist parties in resolving conflicts for themselves. Mediators are unbiased and neutral; they do not judge, give advice or offer solutions. They are there to ensure that sessions are respectful and confidential. Mediations are scheduled to accommodate the parties involved at no cost to any participant. Mediation enables the parties to reach a mutually agreeable solution in the majority of cases.
- B. Community Mediation is a voluntary process which allows citizens, community leaders, community businesses, elected officials, police and other employees of the City of St. Louis who are engaged in a dispute to utilize these services. Mediations regularly address issues like sound, property maintenance and boundaries, parking, lifestyle differences, animal ownership and nuisances, etc. These complaints are generated through various offices such as the Citizens' Service Bureau and Neighborhood Stabilization Team as well as the police. For example, mediation addresses complaints through direct discussion between citizens and officers, providing a forum for resolving problems at early stages of conflict.

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Executive Director of the CRC is employed by the Center to manage, facilitate, supervise and implement this program to serve all citizens within the City of St. Louis and will supply supporting services in providing neutral and confidential mediation. CRC's Mediation Executive Director will facilitate the intake and scheduling of mediation and is responsible for contacting all parties and providing the location for said mediation.

The Executive Director of CRC shall establish a protocol for delivering voluntary mediation services consistent with nationally recognized standards for community mediation services including measures to ensure the confidentiality of mediations. CRC shall monitor the outcomes and lasting results of mediations.

CRC employees shall communicate to the employees and citizens of the City of St. Louis the availability of the voluntary mediation services as a confidential, conflict resolution option and alternative to the formal grievance process, appeals or litigation.

- B. Voluntary Community Mediators are competent, professionally trained volunteers from the community who provide mediation services. To this end, CRC has established a professional training program to ensure that volunteer mediators receive professional training that is consistent with nationally recognized standards for community mediation. Volunteer community mediators shall serve without compensation.

The CRC shall provide mediation services for the resolutions of disputes between the following individuals and entities:

1. Citizens of the City of St. Louis
2. Municipal Offices and Divisions
3. Police Division of the Department of Public Safety
4. Fire Division of the Department of Public Safety
5. All employees of the City of St. Louis
6. Businesses located within the City of St. Louis
7. Community and non-for-profit organizations

## **V. REQUEST FOR MEDIATION SERVICES**

- A. The CRC in consultation with DHS shall develop and establish a process for receiving and reviewing requests for mediation services between individuals, businesses and other agencies, and individuals and businesses or other agencies.
- B. The CRC in consultation with DHS shall develop and establish similar protocols regarding requests for mediation services in which the Police Division or other City of St. Louis offices or divisions would be a participant. Such protocols shall be limited to the process for requesting and initiating mediations and shall in no way concern or impact the rules of mediations or their conduct.

City of St. Louis employees who participate in mediation related to their City employment may be granted paid time off (i.e. work time) by their appointing authority to attend the mediation sessions. Verification of the time employees spent participating in mediation will be provided by CRC staff. Additionally, the CRC will provide the appointing authority written notice if the mediation has or has not resulted in a resolution.

Where appropriate, City employees may be encouraged to consider mediation services prior to filing grievances under the Department of Personnel Administrative

Regulation No. 51. If an employee agrees to participate in the mediation program and their grievance is not satisfactorily resolved, the employee may still file their grievance under Administrative Regulation No 51 within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of notice from the Conflict Resolution Center (CRC) that no resolution was achieved.

- C. The CRC shall review all requests for mediation within thirty (30) calendar days of its receipt, and make a determination as to whether or not mediation is appropriate. Within five (5) calendar days thereafter, the CRC shall notify the parties in writing. Compliance with these timelines requires each party to provide accurate contact information to ensure each dispute is addressed expeditiously.

## **VI. RECORDS**

The Executive Director shall maintain records detailing the types and number of mediations conducted, the number of participants served, and the number of voluntary trained mediators providing mediation services under the program. These records shall include the outcomes and lasting results of mediation and expenditures.

Any questions regarding this joint regulation or requests for mediation should be referred to the Executive Director of the CRC at 314-255-7449 or by email at [mediationmanagerstl@gmail.org](mailto:mediationmanagerstl@gmail.org). The CRC's website is [www.stlresolutioncenter.org](http://www.stlresolutioncenter.org).

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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